

The Female Academy of the Sacred Heart
8 Prince Street
Rochester
Monroe County
New York

HABS No. NY-5644

HABS
NY,
28-ROCH,
18-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. NY-5644

THE FEMALE ACADEMY OF THE SACRED HEART

NY,

28-ROCH. 18-

Location: 8 Prince Street, on the east side between East Avenue and University Avenue, Rochester, Monroe County, New York

Present Owner and Occupant: The Female Academy of the Sacred Heart

Present Use: Private girls' school

Statement of Significance: The complex composed of five separate but adjoining structures reflects not only the stylistic time each was constructed but also the compatibility of varied materials and varied forms. The Female Academy of the Sacred Heart is located within the City of Rochester's East Avenue Preservation District.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Dates of Erection: The original house was built c. 1845. The adjoining school building to the north was built in 1874. The chapel immediately to the north was built in 1890-91. The next north adjoining structure, a bridge and study hall wing, were constructed in 1922. The northern-most building, the gymnasium, was built in 1931.
2. Architects: The architect of the original house is unknown. The 1874 structure was designed by Charles Coots, who also designed the Rochester House of Refuge (see HABS No. NY-5645, George Thompson House). The Chicago architect A. Druiding designed the chapel which was erected in 1890-91. The architect of the bridge and study hall wing is unknown. In 1931, the firm of Arnold and Stein designed the gymnasium.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The southern-most parcel, one hundred and sixty-five feet fronting on Prince Street, containing the original house, is located approximately three hundred and fifty-six feet from the intersection of Prince Street and East Avenue.

1863 Deed, December 18, 1863, Book 181, p. 193.
From: John W. Dwinelle of San Francisco, by his
attorney, Belden R. McAlpine, and Cornelia B.
Dwinelle, his wife.
To: Clemence Cornelis, Mother Superior.
For: \$17,500.00.

The next north parcel has a frontage on Prince Street of one hundred and fifty feet. A restrictive covenant was placed on this parcel that no building of public religious worship may be erected.

1864 Deed, August 10, 1864, Book 187, p. 387.
From: John Siddons and Laetitia, his wife.
To: Clemence Cornelis.
For: \$4,250.00.

The next north parcel has a frontage on Prince Street of two hundred and fifty feet.

1866 Deed, April 11, 1866, Book 210, p. 298.
From: James F. Alden and Mary, his wife, of New
York City.
To: Clemence Cornelis.
For: \$7,600.00.

The three parcels, totalling approximately three acres were thus conjoined.

1869 Deed, May 31, 1869, Book 230, p. 121.
From: Clemence Cornelis.
To: The Female Academy of the Sacred Heart.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: The contractor of the 1874 building was Thomas Mitchell. The cost of the structure was \$100,000.00. The general contractor of the chapel was Hiram Haskell Edgerton. Carpentry was done by Joseph May. Stonework was done by Whitmore, Rauber and Vicinus. The cost of the structure was \$30,000.00. Daniel J. Meagher was the contractor of the gymnasium.
5. Original plans: Some plans remain in the archival collection of the Academy.
6. Alterations and addition: Immediately after the purchase of the original house in 1863, a two story, two bay addition was added to the east facade. In 1869, another two story, two bay addition was added to the east side of the 1863 section. This second addition was built to accommodate day students.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

In 1849, the Religious Order of the Sacred Heart arrived in Buffalo to form a school. Lack of public support forced the school to move to Rochester in 1855. The first school was located on North Saint Paul Street. In 1863, the encroaching industrialization of the area and lack of additional grounds for expansion forced the school to move to its new location on Prince Street. Although the school had developed into an exclusive, expensive educational institution, Bishop McQuaid requested in 1970 that students unable to meet tuition costs be admitted gratis.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Bibliography:

a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Deeds, Office of Monroe County Clerk.

b. Secondary and published sources:

Callan, Louise. The Society of the Sacred Heart in America. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1937.

Madden, Elizabeth C. A Century of Love. Centennial Booklet of the Academy. Rochester: James Connolly Printing Co., 1955.

Rochester Daily Union and Advertiser. August 17, 1855; September 18, 1865; October 12, 1869; September 3, 1874; October 14, 1875.

Schmidt, Carl and Ann. Architecture and Architects of Rochester, New York. Rochester: Rochester Society of Architects, 1959.

2. Likely sources not yet investigated: All archival records of the Female Academy of the Sacred Heart.

Prepared by Kevin Patrick Harrington
Society For the Pre-
servation of Land-
marks in Western New
York
February 7, 1967

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The three hundred and fifty foot west facade spans three major periods of scholastic Gothic Revival architecture. The picturesque manner in which the structures are balanced and set together make this complex architecturally interesting.
2. Condition of fabric: The buildings have been well maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: Three hundred and fifty feet by one hundred and fifteen feet; facade composed of five separate buildings, all adjoining; three story structures with no common roof line; E-shaped plan with additional projections.
2. Foundations: All foundations are masonry.
3. Wall construction: The original three bay building has salmon colored brick walls with horizontal stone bands. The 1874 eleven bay structure has brick walls with recessed panels framing the units of fenestration. The chapel has a random ashlar brown Medina stone front and brick side walls set with recessed, corbeled panels framing the bays. The 1922 three bay structure has undecorated brick walls. The six bay gymnasium has brick walls set with two story pointed recessed panels.
4. Structural system, framing: Some masonry walls are load bearing; others have interior steel columns. There are wood joists, rafters and partitions.
5. Chimneys: Two chimneys are visible from the west, one each on the original structure and the 1874 building.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The original building has a four panel center entrance door with sidelight and toplight. The 1874 building has an elaborate west four panel entrance door framed by molded and paneled pilasters and flanking sidelights. Above is a Tudor, paneled arch fitted with a four pane

oculus and an eared, flat arched stone cap. Other four panel entrance doors are located to the north of the tower projection and at the east end of the projecting east-west wing. Exterior entrances to the chapel are located toward the east end of the south and north walls.

- b. Windows: Most windows are double hung with either two over two, four over four, or three over three light sashes. The windows in the original house are framed by rectangular banded stone lintels and slightly projecting sills. The windows of the 1874 section are framed with flat rectangular stone lintels set with flat Tudor arches and slightly projecting window sills. The west end of the chapel has a five-part Gothic Revival pointed arched window with heavy tracery outlining lancet panes below a circular rose-type window. This window is set in a slightly recessed masonry panel which has a pointed arched stone molding, bracketed and decorated. The bays of the chapel have pointed arched stained glass windows with similar tracery. The second level of the bridge has two pointed stained glass windows to the west. The single level, two-car wide driveway access through this wing is framed by a stone lintel. The study hall wing windows have vertical brick lintels and slightly projecting sills. The third story of the gymnasium is fitted with pointed windows which frame the top of the recessed brick fenestration panels. Other windows have vertical brick lintels.
7. Roof: The slightly built-up hipped roof of the original building has a rectangular cupola which is fitted with two flat arched windows per side. The molded overhanging eaves of the low pitched roof are finished with a simply molded cornice. The slightly gabled mansard roof of the 1874 building has gabled dormers which have incised triangular panels set on pilasters. The slate shingled roof is finished with a decorative upper molding and molded, bracketed eaves. The four-sided bell tower which rises from the stepped and gabled projection of the west facade has a steeply pitched roof. The hooded, molded, bracketed profile frames undecorated medallions which are flanked by rectangular louvred openings. A small steeply pitched spire mounted by a cross finishes the composition. The steeply pitched gabled roof of the chapel is finished to the west with an

arched Gothic parapet topped by a cross. The slate-covered roof is pierced by triangular dormers fitted with quatrefoil tracery and topped by finials. The west end is flanked by octagonal turrets which rise to flared stone pinnacles topped by finials. The roof, which terminates to the east as the conical roof of the apse, is fitted with an iron cresting. The gymnasium has a flat roof which is finished with a stone crest. Five triangular brick piers which extend from the crest to the base and project from the wall surface are topped by undecorated stone finials.

8. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: The three-sectioned porch of the original house extends the full width. Paired, squared and chamfered columns support the slightly hipped roof porch. The center projection serves as a porte-cochere. A six step stairway with iron handrails provides access to the elevated level of the original house. An open terrace with decorative iron railing extends along the facade from the elevated level of the porch entrance to the southern entrance of the 1874 structure. There is a second story porch to the rear of the east wing of this structure. Monumental stairs reach the porch level which is fitted with lattice skirting. There are also two uncovered stoops to the rear of this building.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: The center entrance of the original house provides access to a parlor to the left and a drawing room to the right. A north-south hall which extends into the 1874 building intersects the entrance hall to the east of these rooms. The large north-south living room is located to the east of the entrance hall. There are classrooms in the additions to the east. The kitchen is located in the basement.

The 1874 structure has a north-south central corridor serving the academic and institutional rooms on the four floors. There are two staircases, one at each end of the central unit. There is an elevator, kitchen, lunch room, and toilet facilities on the first floor; classroom and offices on the second floor; dormitory on the third floor; art and faculty rooms on the fourth floor. The basement of the chapel contains the kindergarten, utility room and mechanical room.

2. Stairways: The original house contains a stairway on the south wall of the 1863 addition. During the work

of 1863, the original residential staircase was removed. The two stairways in the 1874 structure which extend through the four floors are located in open wells. A narrow, winding staircase provides access to the bell tower.

3. Flooring: There are inlaid floors in the principal rooms of the original house. The entrance floor is done in mosaic tile. The chapel floor is parquet. There are hardwood floors throughout the structures.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The original structure has plaster walls and molded plaster ceilings. All other walls and ceilings are painted plaster.
5. Doorways and doors: The original building has nine foot high, paneled doors set in wide flat molded frames.
6. Special decorative features: In the original house, the living room has a Greek Revival two-columned arcade framing the east bay window. The fluted Tuscan columns are set on molded bases. The center molded ceiling panel is fitted with pebble finished metal sheets. The original marble fireplaces have a molded round arched surround with central cartouche and paneled spandrels. The parlor has a Queen Anne's lace design hand-painted on the walls. The molded ceiling panel is fitted with an elaborate plaster work floral medallion from which hangs an electrified crystal chandelier. Directly below the center ceiling motif is placed in the parquet floor an intricately inlaid square panel with a center circle framing a single stag set between two trees.

The decorated rib vaulting of the chapel springs from elaborately carved column brackets which are spaced between the window bays. The east apse is similarly vaulted. The wall spaces between the brackets and the tower wall area have a stencilled pattern surrounding five full-length figures of saints. The apse opening is elaborately framed by a molded pointed arch set on free-standing marble columns with compound bases. The entire composition frames the white stone Gothic Revival altar. The high, paneled oak wainscot serves as the back of the elevated side pews. Two ranges of carved oak pews face the altar. The choir and organ loft to the west are placed in front of the large west window. On the south side at the third level,

there is a semi-circular arcaded balcony which is set in a solid paneled and traced bay. Access to this balcony is provided by a door into the central north-south corridor of the adjoining 1874 structure.

7. Hardware: Most of the hardware is original to each of the structures.
8. Heating: There is a central hot water heating system.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The whole complex faces west, set back from Prince Street on a slight rise. The grade drops to the east exposing portions of the basements. Tennis courts and playground are located to the east of the range.
2. Historic landscape design: The west lawns are pleasantly planted with large shade trees, evergreens and decorative shrubs. The property is located within the City of Rochester's East Avenue Preservation District.
3. Outbuildings: A small brick chapel is located to the southeast of the original building.
4. Walks: A circular entrance drive approaching the original structure is flanked by dressed masonry piers with stone caps.

Prepared by George O. Gray
Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in Western New York
September 13, 1969

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This recording project of twenty-six selections of historical and architecturally significant Rochester structures was undertaken in 1966, by the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in Western New York, Inc., Mrs. Patrick Harrington, Executive Director, in cooperation with the Historic American Buildings Survey, James C. Massey, Chief. The project was under the general direction of John Poppeliers, Senior Historian. Architectural and historical descriptions were contributed by the Society for the Preservation of Landmarks in Western New York, Inc. General photographic documentation was undertaken by Hans Padelt, Senior Engineer, Graflex, on

a contractual basis with the Historic American Buildings Survey. The final documentation and editing was done by Susan R. Slade in 1978, for transmittal to the Library of Congress and the impending publication of the Historic American Buildings Survey New York State catalogue.